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An additional Agency of Education position within the Child Nutrition Program is needed in FY22:

All schools in Vermont are temporarily providing universal school meals in the 2020-21 school year thanks to waivers made available by the USDA. These waivers are expected to end before the start of the 2021-22 school year. Many schools have indicated to the Agency of Education that they would like to continue providing universal school meals in the 2021-22 school year after the temporary waivers end. They are able to do so by participating in a federal option that allows them to serve universal school meals.

The Agency of Education has indicated in testimony that they are unlikely to have the staffing capacity within the Child Nutrition Programs to continue the normal work they need to do, the additional work that the pandemic has brought, and provide the support that individual schools need in enrolling in and implementing the federal option to provide universal school meals. In order to meet their ongoing workload and ensure that schools who want to provide universal school meals in the fall of 2021 are able to do so successfully and maximize the federal funding available to support school meals, the Agency will need an additional position added to their Child Nutrition team.

We request that the Legislature authorize an additional position for the Child Nutrition Program to be filled in FY22. We believe the appropriation will need to be approximately \$100,000.